WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY - Founded December 17, 1857 MAY 1986

WASHTENAW IMPRESSIONS

RIVER RAISIN BATTLEFIELD, 1789 TRADING POST, CUSTER MEMORABILIA ON MONROE TOUR AGENDA

Monroe, Michigan—site of the bloodiest battle on Michigan soil, the second oldest building in the state and the hometown of General George Armstrong Custer—will be the WCHS bus tour destination Saturday, June 14.

It will include the Monroe museum in the former post office, tour of Monroe and the battlefield, a visit to the Navarre-Anderson trading post, a 1789 log structure (clapboarded over) and a country store exhibit in a former one-room school.

Lunch will be at Norman Towers, a deluxe retirement home in the former Hall of the Divine Child military school operated by the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Headquarters of the IHM nuns, an order founded in Monroe in the 1840's, is nearby along with St. Mary's Academy.

The museum features Custer exhibits as well as Indian, pioneer and War of 1812. A museum guide will lead the bus around town.

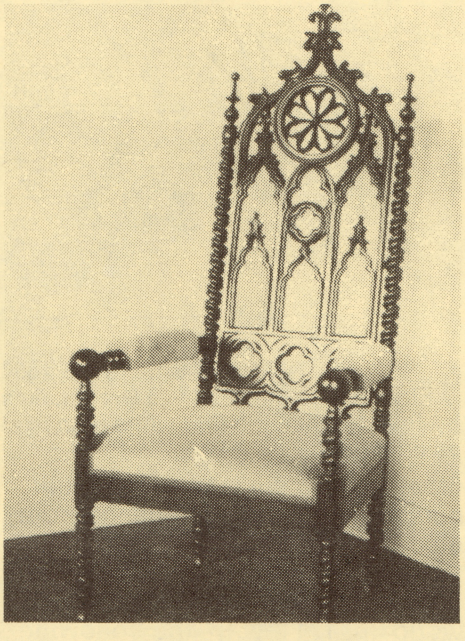
The battle of the River Raisin, a rout for the surprised Americans, took place January 22, 1813. British and prisoners returned to Fort Malden, leaving about 60 wounded behind at Frenchtown as it was then called.

Early the next morning, Indians, angry at their losses of the previous day, returned and murdered and scalped the wounded, giving rise to the battle cry, "Remember the Raisin."

Lunch will include soup, fruit plate and sweet bread, beverage and dessert.

Prepaid reservations are due Tuesday, June 10, to WCHS Tour, 1520 Martha, Ann Arbor, MI 48103. Questions? Call 662-6275 or 663-8826. (See enclosed tour registration card.)

The bus will leave Ann Arbor at 9 a.m. from near the bank in the Maple Village parking lot and return by 5 p.m. The fee is $15 per person.



This circa, 1850 Gothic Revival Chair made by Meeks Brothers Furniture Company, New York City, is one of the WCHS treasures in storage awaiting a home. This issue of *Impressions* with letter enclosed is being sent to the county's professional community to promote awareness of the lack of suitable storage and display space. Gary Kuehnle, collections chairman, says this chair is similar to one purchased last year by the Metropolitan Museum of Art for a record $5,200.

HELP NEEDED TO PARK CARS AT ART FAIR

During the Ann Arbor Art Fair July 23-26, Washtenaw County Historical Society will again be parking cars after business hours, this year at Comerica Bank (formerly Huron Valley) at Washington and Fifth Avenue.

Member help, male and female, is urgently needed evenings and from Saturday noon after the bank closes. The money helps pay for storage of the Society collection. If you can spare an hour or two please call Chairman Art French at (home) 662-4964 or (office) 668-7769. Usually two or three members work together so you won't be alone.

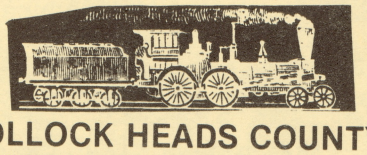
JUDGE CAMPBELL WILL SHOW OLD WASHTENAW SCENES AT MEETING

The early history of Ann Arbor and Washtenaw County is a continuing hobby of Washtenaw Circuit Judge Ross Campbell who will present a slide show of old-time Washtenaw scenes at the WCHS annual meeting at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 21, at Bentley Library.

Officers will be elected and the membership will vote on adding two sections to the Bylaws at the business meeting preceding. Bentley Library is at 1150 Beal on the U-M North Campus. The meeting is open to the public free of charge. Refreshments will be served.

Judge Campbell descends from a family that came to Ann Arbor in 1826. He has a large collection of slides made from old pictures which he will show.

The bylaws additions, outlined in full in the April issue, would add two sections to Article VII, Officers and Directors, dealing with resignations and removal from office.



POLLOCK HEADS COUNTY CELEBRATION OF STATE 1987 SESQUICENTENNIAL

David Pollock of the Ann Arbor Historical Foundation and a WCHS director is chairman of the Washtenaw County Sesquicentennial Advisory Council appointed by County Commissioners to plan local events in honor of the State of Michigan's 150th birthday.

Michigan became a state January 26, 1837, 150 years ago, as a result of the "Frost-bitten convention" December 15, 1836, in the Washtenaw County courthouse. One event is planned in December at the courthouse. Others are to be announced.

Kathleen Chapman, president of Chelsea Historical Society, is vice-chairperson and Billy Zolkosky of Ypsilanti museum, secretary.

IMAGINATIVE EARLY MAP MAKERS ADDED MOUNTAINS HERE, ISLANDS THERE

Instead of today's I-75 interstate highway some imaginative early map makers showed a mountain ridge running from the tip of Florida to the tip of Michigan's lower peninsula. Others showed California as an island.

And because early mapmakers partly relied on other mapmakers who were often inaccurate, their mistakes and misconceptions could be cartographically perpetuated for generations.

David Bosse, curator of maps at the U-M's Clements Library of American history, discussed the evolution of early maps of the Great Lakes area and showed slides of them at the April WCHS meeting at Clements.

After the meeting, the audience could inspect some copies of the early, often distorted, maps that hang framed at the library.

"The motives underlying the early exploration and mapping of the Great Lakes region are, broadly speaking, four," he said:

1. Persistent hope of finding a water route through the continent to China and India, the fabled Northwest Passage that many lives and a great deal of money was expended on finding without success.

2. The fur trade which dominated the northern colonies for decades, explorations directly related to the desire for furs in European countries.

3. The French and English desperately wanted to discover riches in North America as the Spanish had in South America.

4. And probably the most important motive in terms of cartography was missionary activity. French priests, especially Jesuits, penetrated the area with tenacity seldom matched by laymen. Furthermore, unlike most early travelers in the lakes, they were educated. They kept journals and, often, they made maps.

"You should bear in mind that early mapmakers basically relied on two sources of information in compiling their maps, (1) explorers, traders and native informants, and (2) other mapmakers, both groups often inaccurate.

"In the case of mapmakers, other factors such as propaganda, personal gain and negligence were also involved. Recognizing this, the English cartographer, Herman Moll published a map of the new world in 1711 with the following description:

> Among all ye cheats that ye world are dayly abus'd with, none have lately been more scandalous than that of maps, sometimes new ones are put out by ignorant pretenders, sometimes mean and imperfect foreign maps are copi'd and publish'd by them as their own, and haveing no judgement or knowledge of what is good or bad, correct or incorrect, they basely impose on the publick with pompous titles, & pretend they are countenanced & assisted by those who either never saw or despise their wretched performances...

"The difficult grammatical construction of this sentence is equalled only by Moll's atrocious misspelling, a weakness which may have affected his career. At that time it was a common practice to dedicate the map to a worthy superior.

"We can only speculate about Moll's fate when his patron received a map inscribed 'the duck (duke) of Gloucester.'

"The point of all this is that many of the old maps that you are about to see may be regarded as distorted curiosities but a great number of them substantially contributed to understanding of what is now Michigan or significantly changed the way in which the area was portrayed.

"In addition, the cartographic record chronicles exploration and settlement as well as showing European and American perceptions of the region.

"I would suggest that anyone interested in history of Michigan and the Great Lakes must turn to maps to gain a complete impression of any given period.

"Aside from the drawing in Columbus's printed letter of 1494, the first distinct – some may argue my use of 'distinct' – representation of the new world is Juan de la Cosa's manuscript map in 1500.

"De la Cosa was a navigator for Columbus. You may make out the outline of the British Isles, Spain and Africa and (to left, too close) was de la Cosa's conception of the new world. It's a rather remarkable map considering it's based on very little actual information.

NICOLAS SANSON'S 1650 MAP OF NORTH AMERICA

First map to show all five Great Lakes. It incorporates information brought back by Jean Nicolet, the first white man to see Lake Superior. Note California is shown as an island.

Photos courtesy of Clements Library

By the mid-16th century, when evidence of the Great Lakes first appears, the configuration of North America was crude. Gerhard Mercator's 1569 world map is first to indicate an inland sea. He calls it the *Mare Dulce* which is based on Jacques Cartier's discovery and ascent of the St. Lawrence River in 1534-35.

"There was some controversy over whether or not he had in mind what we now know as Hudson Bay but he described it as fresh water and many scholars believe this is the first representation of the Great Lakes.

"At the time of Cartier's explorations in Canada, 1534, information on the existence of the lakes was gathered from Indian informants rather than first hand observations.

"In 1612, Samuel de Champlain published the results of his explorations of 1608 and '10. This map shows most of the area where Champlain explored and some beyond. In addition to visiting the lake in New York which bears his name, he entered Lake Ontario, and ventured up the Ottawa River to Georgian Bay, part of Lake Huron.

"He correctly determined that there were five great lakes, but uncertain of their dimensions and positions, did not record them on his map."

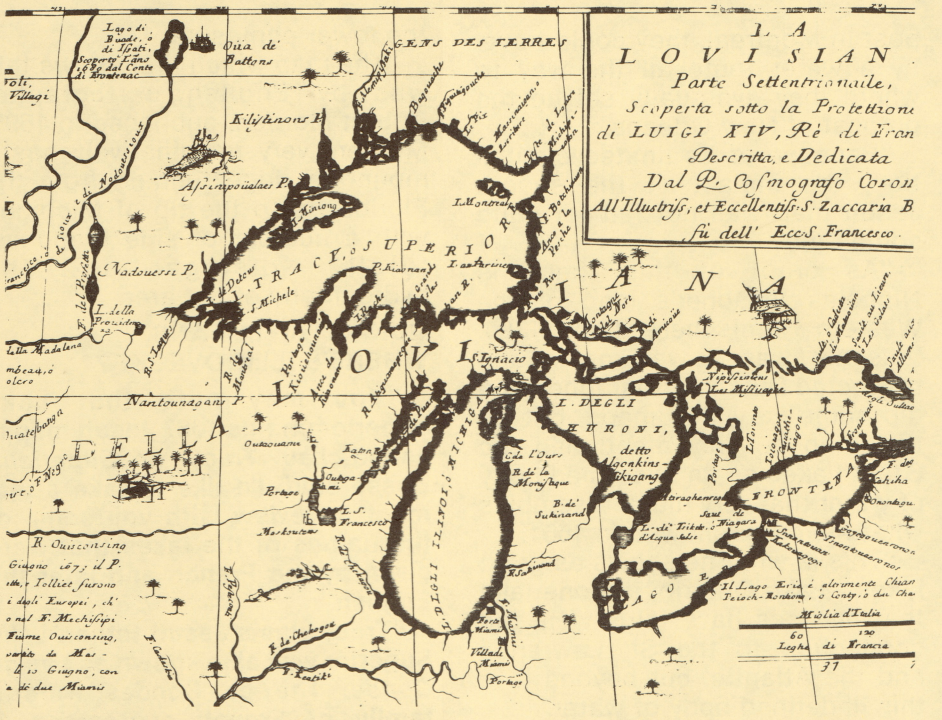
The Champlain map shows the St. Lawrence, Lake Champlain, Lake Ontario and then just indicates the presence of lakes to the west and also calls it the *Mare Dulce* but gives a rather accurate configuration of Hudson Bay.

"It was sometime before Champlain's discoveries were accepted. This 1625 map, attributed to astronomer Henry Briggs, was published in hopes of gaining support for the notion of the northwest passage to India.

"Briggs was an Englishman and was trying to convince the Hanseatic League and other merchant leagues to finance the trip to India. Distinctive features are the absence of all lakes in the interior and also California being shown as an island.

"This was the first printed map to show California in this way and it influenced cartographers for approximately 200 years.

"The French were most active in exploration of inland waterways so it is no surprise that the first map to depict all five lakes was published in Paris.



GREAT LAKES SECTION OF CORONELLI'S 1696 MAP OF *LA LOUISIANA*

An Italian monk, Vicenzo Coronelli, incorporated Jesuit information in this map, the first to put all the lakes including Lake St. Clair in proper order and relative position.

"This 1650 map by Nicolas Sanson incorporates information brought back by Jean Nicolet, first white man to see Lake Superior. Note that Sanson only speculates on the extent of Lakes Michigan and Superior and establishes the peninsulas of Michigan.

"So here, for the first time, we have all five lakes.

"Oddly enough, the last of the Great Lakes to be discovered, was the first to be accurately mapped.

"In 1667, two Jesuit priests set out from their mission on Chequamegon Bay and surveyed several hundred miles of Lake Superior shoreline by canoe. This Jesuit map was published in 1673 in *Jesuit Relations.*

"It is a landmark in mapping of the lakes. With relatively primitive instruments the two fathers produced a remarkably accurate portrayal of the Upper Peninsula and Superior, one which would remain unsurpassed until the 19th century.

"If one takes a moment to consider the enormous task of circumnavigating Lake Superior by canoe and producing a map, you can really appreciate their accomplishment.

"A year before this map of Lake Superior appeared, Louis Joliet, a fur trader, and Father Jacques Marquette set out from a mission at St. Ignace in the Straits of Mackinac to discover the Mississippi River.

"They went by canoe via Green Bay, the Fox and Wisconsin Rivers. They followed the Mississippi as far south as the mouth of the Arkansas River, determining that it entered the Gulf of Mexico and not the Pacific as had been believed by some.

"In 1674, Joliet drew his manuscript map from memory, his notes having been lost when his canoe overturned just as he was in sight of Montreal, a disappointing climax of a journey of over 2,000 miles.

"The map is of great importance, showing as it does the connections between the Great Lakes and the Mississippi. These were the first white men to visit the Mississippi River though knowledge of it had preceded them.

"Various French explorers knew of the river from Indians but here for the first time we see the relationship between the river and lakes.

"The French were very interested in the fur trade and exploiting the interior. From their

post in Montreal, they could travel by a water route all the way to where they eventually set up the outpost of New Orleans.

"Because of its limited circulation, the impact of the superb Jesuit map was not felt for quite some time.

"As proof of this these is Nicholas Visscher's map of the Western Hemisphere dated 1680. Visscher was a well-known and respected Dutch cartographer who did some very fine maps, but on this map he only mentioned the Great Lakes as an ill-defined body of water that very much resembles what Mercator showed in 1561.

"This is what he shows as great lakes—Lake Ontario, the one lake that he does have fairly well, the connection to the St. Lawrence and the Atlantic, but beyond it is this ill-defined body of water.

"When it had been proven to the satisfaction of most that there were five lakes existing, here Visscher shows us this one body and again, California as an island.

"This demonstrates a tendency in early maps to rely on outdated information or as Moll suggested, adopt unreliable sources.

"Eight years following this, in 1688, an Italian monk, Vicenzo Coronelli incorporated the Jesuit information into his map. Without a doubt, this was the finest map of the Great Lakes to be produced up to that point.

"Coronelli is the first to put all the lakes, including Lake St. Clair, in their proper order and relative position. It is, if you will, a watershed map in the cartography of the region. From this point on, only variations are added to the map.

"Of course, not all variations were improvements. In 1703, Juan de Lisle published a map of Canada or New France. We have a framed copy of this out in the stairway.

Although Lake Michigan is shown much more accurately, Lake Huron is quite distorted, and Saginaw Bay is greatly exaggerated. It almost divides the peninsula into two. It is the first map, however, to indicate Cadillac's settlement of Detroit, established in 1701.

"De Lisle issued another map in 1718 which is noteworthy for one glaring inaccurracy—the high plain of land running the length of the lower peninsula.

"The map which first shows this was by English cartographer Robert Morden, published in 1695. Morden, very imaginatively has a mountain ridge running from the Florida tip to the tip of Michigan with a number of side branches, totally disregarding the hydrography of the area.

QUICK, TRIVIA FANS, WHERE'S ILLINOVECKS?

"You may note that Lake Superior on this 1667 Jesuit map is called *Lac Tracy or Superieur,* Bosse said. I'd like to take a moment to review with you some of the names of the lakes that were given by the French and later the English.

"Tracy was a Jesuit father. Lake Superior was also known as *Lac de Conde.* The de Condes were a family of French aristocracy, a number of whom were influential at that time. It was also known as the Upper Lake which makes perfect sense in terms of both elevation and latitude.

"It is also called on maps Lake Nadoweisus which is a variant of the name by which the Sioux Indians were known.

"Lake Michigan was also called on maps Lake Dauphin, Lake Illinois and Lake Illinovecks.

"Lake Huron was shown on maps as Lake Covines, Michigamme and Karegnoandi which must have been an Indian word.

"Lake Erie was called *Lac du Chat,* also Lake Felis, also *Lac Conty.* We have no information on who Conty was.

"Lake Ontario was called by the French *Lac Frontenac.*"

"In defense of this map, it should be mentioned that this is considered one of the finest maps of the Mississippi valley at the time and is known as a 'mother map' in that many others were devised from this, but the idea of this high plain is a fictitious one which is again perpetuated for a number of years.

"There is a note on top of the plain which reads, 'On top of these mountains is a plain-like terrace two-hundred miles in length.' Now, I believe this is the route of highway 75." A 1703 map hanging at Clements is based on the Morden map, he noted.

"Cyprian Southack's map of North America is a rather curious cartographic document published in Boston in 1717, only the second map printed in what is now the United States and first to show all the English colonies.

"The area of the Great Lakes demonstrates a profound ignorance of geography. It is very difficult to make out the Michigan peninsula which is jutting into Lake Illinoveck. It is barely recognizable as are the jumble of lakes.

"I've never read anything that accounted for why Southack made his map this way when there were so many other reliable maps he could have taken his information from. This is what he is calling Lake Ontario, this little puddle. This is Lake Erie. This is Lake Illinoveck which is the name given to Lake Michigan. This is the Michigan peninsula and Lake St. Clair. Above this we have Lakes Huron and Superior.

"Surprisingly Southack went on to produce some of the finest coastal charts that were made in the colonies.

"In 1744 Jacques Bellin published a map of the Great Lakes which appeared in Pierre Francois Charlevoix's *History of New France.* This is a rather famous map. I believe it was issued as a reproduction by a Michigan group.

"What is most remarkable about the map is the appearance of several fictitious islands in Lake Superior. This is the first map where these islands suddenly pop up. They are based on two manuscript surveys done in the 1730's by a French naval captain named Louis de la Ronde.

"The said captain was unscrupulous and trying to further his mining and fur trade interests. To this end he added the imaginary islands and named them for himself and high-placed officials.

"Finding on-site surveys in naval archives, Bellin accepted them as accurate and incorporated the information into his map. The extraneous islands persisted on maps until the 19th century.

"While Isle Royale and the Apostle Islands are okay, here is a Phelippeaux, St. Anne, Pontchartrain, Ronde and others. Purely out of convenience, he added these, hoping to stake a claim to the area,

to show that he had explored it and also to convey favor with some of the people who might be able to help him.

"The Bellin map is also significant for the fact that John Mitchell relied extensively on it when he compiled his famous map of 1755. This has been called by some the most important map in American history by virtue of the fact that the American and British commissioners used it for determining the boundaries of the United States following the American Revolution.

"While generally quite accurate, the Mitchell map placed the lower end of Lake Michigan too far to the north which later resulted in a border dispute between Michigan and Ohio.

"The boundary was going to be drawn from the south end of the lake across. The south end of the lake is further down but this map received official sanction by the fact that it was used during the peace negotiations to establish the western border, also the border in Maine.

"In fact this map was used into the 20th century in border disputes and its inaccuracies have caused a number of problems over the years.

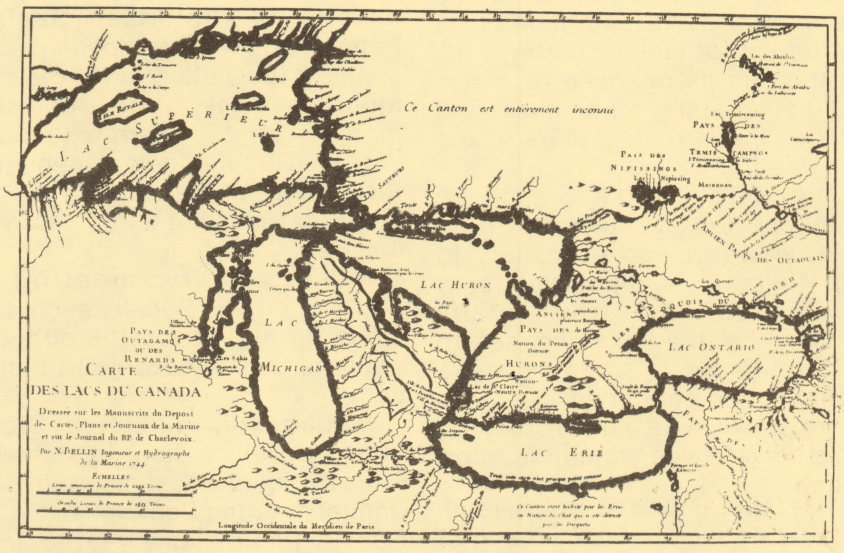
"The first Anglo-American map of Michigan based on personal reconnaissance is Thomas Hutchins's manuscript map of 1762. Leaving Ft. Pitt, the present day site of Pittsburgh in early April, Hutchins was involved in a five-and-a-half month journey, traveling mostly by bateau.

"Hutchins kept a journal. His map is by far the most accurate map of the lower peninsula which had appeared up to that time. Since he skirted the shorelines, little of the interior is shown.

"The first known Michigan mill near the site of Port Huron is noted. Part of Hutchins's mission was to gather information on local Indians. The map included a list of Indian warriors in various Michigan locations.

"It is a very accurate map with some interesting text that goes with it.

"By the end of the 18th century the configuration of Michigan and the Great Lakes had been fairly well established. A good example of this is William McMurray's 1784



JACQUES BELLIN'S 1744 MAP OF GREAT LAKES

***Fictitious islands first "popped up" in Lake Superior on this map. It appeared in Pierre Francois Charlevoix's History of New France.* Also John Mitchell relied on this map for his famous 1755 map which was used to determine boundaries after the Revolution and in border disputes into the 20th century.**

map of the United States based on surveys made for the use of the Continental Army.

"It portrays the shape of the peninsula of Michigan more correctly than on many later maps. McMurray was the first American cartographer to indicate the ten proposed Jeffersonian states that were to be carved out of the Northwest Territory.

"Under that scheme Michigan would have begun north of Lake St. Clair and would have included half of the Upper Peninsula. He named it Cherronesus and a "state" west of Lake Michigan, Michigania. He gave names to all ten of the states, mostly classical Greek ones.

"This, of course, never came about but it was a plan that Jefferson proposed at the time of the peace settlement in 1783.

"It was not until 1822 that the first separate map of Michigan was published by James Finlayson. This map of Michigan territory was issued in the Carey & Lea atlas.

"The accompanying text is of greater value than the map itself which greatly distorts the lower peninsula and upper for that matter. Finlayson claimed that the map was based on information from surveyors, government officials, postmasters and other informed persons.

"I can only conclude that he was either inept or duped. Finlayson located five counties—Oakland, Macomb, Monroe, Wayne and Michilimackinac without boundaries and delineated an Indian line running diagonally from the Grand River to Saginaw Bay but giving no explanation for it. The vertical boundary near Green Bay is also curious, since Michigan Territory extended far to the west at that time.

"The pre-eminent early cartographer of Michigan and much of the old Northwest was John Farmer of Detroit. He published the first map of Michigan in 1826 and later did surveys of many Michigan towns.

"His map of Michigan and Wisconsin Territory was published in 1835. It was an extremely interesting item although Wisconsin Territory was not recognized until 1837, two years after this. He portrays it as running from Lake Michigan to the Missouri River.

"The configuration of Chippewa and Michilimackinac Counties and the diagonal aspect of the map give it an unusual appearance. In regard to Michigan's boundaries, Farmer was loyal to his adopted state by placing Toledo in Monroe County.

"There is evidence of the federal land surveys here. The very small squares are townships in the township and range system.

In response to a question about how these locations were deter-

mined, Bosse said the Jesuits were probably using an astrolabe and compass. An astrolabe is an instrument for taking sightings using the sun as opposed to a sextant using stars. Champlain and most of the early explorers of the area used it.

"They did a remarkably good job when you consider there were no aerial views or space imagery to help them in mapping an area which was vast and totally unkown. By the time we get to Farmer we have more sophisticated equipment.

"Farmer was basically a publisher. He was compiling information.

"The federal land survey was initiated in Ohio in 1787. The first survey of Michigan began in 1815 when a baseline and prime meridian were laid out. To this day, there are a Baseline and Meridian Road.

An 1852 map showed the extent of the survey of Michigan up to that time. "Unlike previous maps, this was not a commercial venture but an official cartographic document produced by the office of the surveyor general in Detroit."

"This brings the mapping of the Great Lakes and Michigan into the modern period. From the mid-19th century to the present, the story of mapping is one of technological refinement and innovation. Today aerial photography and space imagery leave little to the imagination.

The fictitious Lake Superior islands disappeared from the maps when the British Admiralty did surveys of the Great Lakes in 1815-17 although he thought people had known for some time there were no islands there.

HISTORICAL HAPPENINGS

Chelsea Historical Society: Peter Fletcher of Ypsilanti will speak at the dedication of the community's first state historical marker at the former Glazier Welfare Building now occupied by the *Chelsea Standard.* The program is set at 4 p.m. Saturday, June 21.

Next society meeting in September. The Society expects to clean up and fix up the depot as soon as new windows are installed.

Manchester Society: Picnic Monday evening June 16 at Sharon Mills Antiques. Next meeting is the annual meeting September 15. The Society plans a July 4 raffle and a collectibles sale August 9 during sidewalk days.

Northfield Society: Joint potluck supper with Webster Society as guests at 7 p.m. Tuesday, May 27, in social hall of St. Patrick's Catholic Church. A tour of church and rectory is planned. The church is the only township structure now on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Kenneth Zeeb farm on Earhart at Pontiac Trail is the township's most recently designated centennial farm.

Pittsfield Society: Meets 7:30 p.m. first Wednesday through July at township hall, South State and Ellsworth Roads. History day planned Sunday, August 3.

Salem Society: Auction 11 a.m. Saturday, June 7, at South Salem Stone School, North Territorial and Curtis Roads, with John Whalen, auctioneer. The Society is raising money to restore the school and welcomes donations or articles on consignment.

Meet 7:30 p.m. fourth Thursday through summer at the 100-year-old former Congregational Church in Salem.

Webster Society: Next meeting in September. The Society is preparing for October 4 fall festival and selling raffle tickets as a fund raiser to help finish restoration of their 1840's blacksmith shop.

SOCIETY WELCOMES SEVERAL MEMBERS

WCHS welcomes several more members and is re-instating a life member who was inadvertently dropped.

Commercial:
Peter Pollack (Pollack Design Assoc.)
Life:
Susan Wurster Betz, Dexter
Regular and Senior:
Doris Gibb
Dr. H. Mark Hildebrandt
Tonetta Kuening
May Mast, Dexter
Mrs. Nicholas Prakken
Peter Rocco
Lillian Ward

EAT AT KNAPPS? SAVE POINTS FOR SCREEN

WCHS needs a screen to show slides on and Bill Knapp's restaurants have a community support program in which they will give a point for each dollar spent there towards an organization's merchandise goal.

All you have to do is ask for the points when you pay your bill and they will give you a slip. Save the slips and send or bring them to Alice Ziegler, 537 Riverview Drive, Ann Arbor, MI 48104. You or your friends can get the points from any Knapp's restaurant.

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WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEETING
7:30 P.M. WEDNESDAY MAY 21, 1986

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